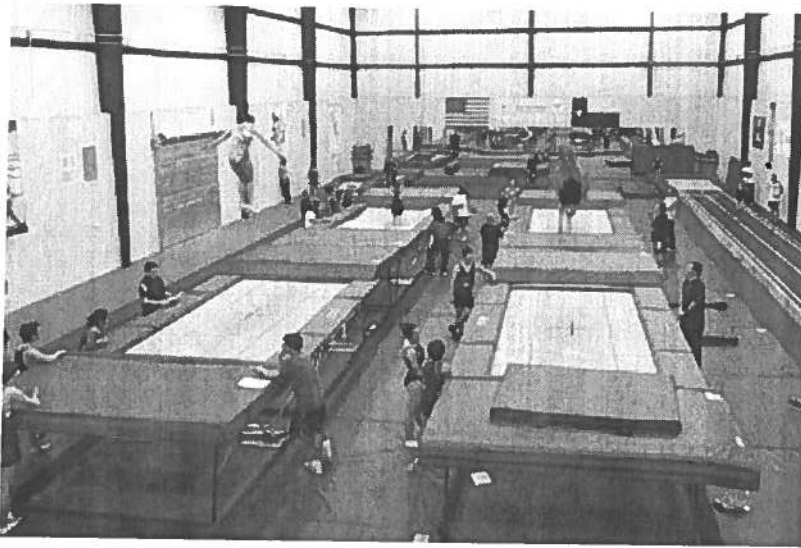


Submitted by  
Donald McPherson

## AAP study differentiates between structured trampoline programs and backyard trampolines



INDIANAPOLIS, Sept. 24, 2012 – The American Academy of Pediatrics today released a policy statement, "Trampoline safety in childhood and adolescence." Although the piece focused mostly on the dangers of backyard trampolines, the paper separated backyard/recreational trampolines and activities from trampolines used in structured training programs. The statement's conclusion stated, "Pediatricians should only endorse use of trampolines as part of a structured training program with appropriate coaching, supervision and safety measures in place."

"In a supervised environment like a gymnastics club, trampoline activity has incredible benefits for kids, whether training for a sport or getting fit," said Steve Penny, president of USA Gymnastics. "USA Gymnastics club programs are designed to follow the highest in both safety and equipment standards in the development and training of an athlete. The differences between a backyard trampoline and trampoline training at a gymnastics club are vast, and we applaud the AAP for recognizing those differences as noted in today's policy statement."

Dr. George Drew, an emergency room doctor, was a consultant on developing the AAP policy and also serves as a national trampoline coach and team physician for USA Gymnastics. He is board certified in emergency medicine and is with Valley Emergency Physicians in South Bend, Ind., which is affiliated with Indiana University School of Medicine at the University of Notre Dame.

"The authors were careful to separate competitive trampoline and structured training programs from the injuries seen in backyard trampoline use and jump/trampoline parks," said Drew, who is a past competitive trampolinist. "As a consultant to the study, I was pleased they took the time to carefully examine the safety differences between backyard trampolines and a structured program. Every single safety recommendation made by authors is already in place at any reputable program in our sport."

Some of the benefits of trampoline activity include: low-impact cardiovascular training; working the muscles of the entire body at one time; building spatial awareness; and cross training for many sports, such as gymnastics, BMX biking, skate and snow boarding, water skiing, wake boarding, snow skiing, trick skiing, and diving. Trampoline is also an effective and easy way for overweight individuals to get in shape and enjoy an athletic activity from the beginning.

In gymnastics clubs, coaches use a variety of teaching tools – a bungee system, rope/belt harness, pit training, etc. – and follow the accepted skill progression, which means an athlete does not do a skill until he/she has mastered the appropriate progression of easier and preliminary skills.

"This is not the first time that AAP has examined trampoline use in their patient population," said Drew. "This is the third official policy statement since 1971, but it is really the first time the authors and organization have recognized the differences between backyard trampolines and structured training programs. One of the key points in the statement is, 'Given the significant differences between the recreational and the structured training settings, extrapolation of data from the recreational setting to a formal training program is not appropriate.' This is an indication of the thorough examination done by the authors, and the recognition that the trampoline is a piece of gymnastics equipment that was not intended to become a backyard toy."

The use of trampolines requires appropriate and careful supervision, competent instruction, and proper equipment and safety measures, in an environment where these requirements can be met. USA Gymnastics only endorses the use of trampolines in properly supervised, progression-oriented programs directed by USA Gymnastics professional members.

Trampoline joined the Olympic program in 2000, and the United States has qualified an athlete at every Games. In 2008 and 2012, the USA qualified both a man and a woman for the Olympic Games, and in 2012, Savannah Vinsant became the first U.S. gymnast to advance to the finals. The modern trampoline was patented by George Nissen in 1945 as a training tool for gymnastics, acrobats and military aviators. It grew into a competitive sport in the 1960s and 1970s.

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

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### **Education & Achievements**

- Former Junior & Senior National Team Member U.S.T.A
- Former National Competitor- trampoline, tumbling, double mini, & synchro
- Former International Competitor- trampoline, tumbling, double mini
- Numerous competitive awards & accolades between 1965-1975
- Guest Coach & Clinician at numerous clubs, camps, J.O. & Elite training camps from 1970 to present.
- Attended Southwest Missouri State on scholarship and was Assistant Women's Gymnastics Coach under Dr. Charles 'Chic' Johnson 1975-1977.
- Attended George Williams College on scholarship as 'student assistant' and was Assistant Women's Gymnastics Coach under Nora Campbell 1978-1980.
- Established Aerial Gymnastics Club in July 1977. Owner, Director, & Head Coach
- Awarded 'Coach of the Year' several times.
- Awarded 'Contributor of the Year' several times
- Awarded U.S.A.G. Service Award 1992
- Co-author & contributor to 'The Bail Swing' published in 'Technique'
- Co-author & contributor to "Twisting" & "Twisting Bar Dismounts" published in Technique
- Co-founded 'Region V Training Camps' in 1988. These camps and their concepts have been modeled throughout the US. Camp Director, Coach, & Clinician numerous times since its inception.
- Coached numerous Individual Event & All-Around Champions at the State, Regional, National & International level both boys and girls.
- Have served on the USAG Illinois State Board since 1986 as Safety Chairman
- Have represented USAG and my country as an International Coach with my National Team Members.
- Over 100 Aerial Gym Club gymnasts, both boys & girls, have been awarded full athletic scholarships at various colleges throughout the USA.
- USAG Professional Member since its inception.
- USAG National Safety Certifier and recognized by my peers as an expert coach
- USAG Congress- Clinician, Lecturer, & Volunteer
- USAG Safety/Risk Management Review Board Member
- Inducted into Illinois Lifetime Achievement Award 2008
- Had athlete qualify to 2008 Olympic Trials
- Guest Speaker Loyola Sports Medicine Update 2011 With Course Directors

**I have owned and operated gymnastics schools for 30 years. I have coached all levels of gymnastics, both boys and girls, ranging from 3 year-olds to Elite (Olympic) athletes. I have acted as a USA National Team coach, both nationally and internationally.**

**I am a national speaker and clinician. I have given presentations on topics ranging from how to teach certain high level gymnastics elements, lawsuits in the sport of gymnastics, eating disorders, physical preparation for competitive gymnastics, emotional as well as sexual abuse in the sport of gymnastics, and many other issues as they arise.**

**I am the Illinois USAG Safety Chair. I am consulted as to safety practices in the sport of gymnastics, safety practices in gymnastics club facilities, advocating and writing certification letters to city townships across the country for gymnastics club owners in pursuit of 'Certificates of Occupancy' where certain building and fire codes must be met.**

**While I am recognized as an expert by my peers and colleagues in the gymnastics profession, I have also qualified as an expert in litigation matters prosecuted in both the United States and Canada. Since 1979, I have been retained as an expert in more than four hundred cases in which I have reviewed plaintiff and defendant briefs, written expert opinions and in many of those cases I have testified before a court.**